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ABSTRACT

The purpose of this three-week teaching unit on China is to promote interest in the People's Republic of China, to investigate China's role in world politics, and to promote cultural awareness. Chinese culture and geography are covered while research skills, group work, and oral presentations are stressed through assignments. The unit contains: (1) objectives; (2) teacher's instructions; (3) a daily outline of activities; (4) suggested additional activities; (5) required resource materials; (6) a list of 10 films; (7) an outline map of China; and (8) a teacher's comment sheet. The first appendix contains a list of curriculum materials, supplementary curriculum materials, and a list of realia for the China chest, and in the second appendix, a story using English words and Chinese characters, is provided along with a glossary. (DJC)

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DISCOVERING CHINA

A THREE WEEK TEACHING-LEARNING UNIT FOR UPPER ELEMENTARY GRADES

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March 1986

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PREFACE

So often we teachers are required to teach curriculum that we find wanting of certain ideas, concepts, and content. In fact, the strict new requirements for accountability leave little room for originality and creativity. This holds particularly true for the elementary teacher who has the heavy responsibility to teach all major disciplines and award each equal time and value.

The author hopes that the three week teaching learning unit on China accompanied by the China Chest of realia gives the enthusiastic teacher inspiration and motivation to teach about the oldest civilization of our global village.

Toni Fuss Kirkwood
March 1986

Discovering China: A Three Week Teaching-Learning Unit
A Model

Introduction

The China Chest contains realia collected in the People's Republic of China in the mid 1980's. The purpose of this collection is to provide elementary teachers with the opportunity

1. to become interested in the People's Republic of China,

2. to investigate China as a nation that is playing an increasingly important and valuable role in world politics and world economics, and

3. to gain a better understanding and appreciation of the people of the global village.

This approach to study and to appreciate another culture can be applied to any society you choose to teach.

The three week teaching-learning unit is modeled after the Hilda Taba recommendation for the in-depth study of a particular culture or issue into the existing curriculum* The unit follows the three divisions of a brief segment of Introductory, the lengthy period for Developmental and the Culminating portion for conclusion of the unit.

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*Hilda Taba. Curriculum Development: Theory and Practice. Harcourt, Brace, Jovanovich, Inc., Atlanta, GA 1962, pp. 343-379.

Objectives

Upon completion of the three-week teaching-learning unit, the student will exhibit certain attitudes, knowledge, and skills about China. Specifically, the student will be able to

1. learn to understand and appreciate another country, its people, and their contributions to the world community
2. demonstrate factual knowledge about the geography of China
3. understand the geographic relationship of China with the rest of the world
4. compare and contrast the basic institutions of China with another culture previously studied
5. make generalizations about China based on the concepts of change, communications, conflict, and interdependence
6. develop a vocabulary list of new concepts encountered
7. raise questions about China
8. conduct research from print and nonprint materials
9. know how to work in groups
10. demonstrate positive group interrelation skills
11. exhibit full responsibility taken for assignment within group
12. exercise critical thinking and decision-making skills
13. write in grammatically correct form a four page research paper (specific assignment decided by teacher)
14. present research orally to class.

Instructions to Teachers

1. This teaching-learning unit should be conducted within a three week time frame on a regular daily basis.

2. The role of the teacher is that of a motivator, facilitator, and coach. This role includes emphasis on individual and group work, decision-making-, critical thinking-, writing-, research-, and oral presentation skills and the student's responsibility to him-herself as well as to group in completion of task.

3. The teacher also keeps records, time tables, makes appointments with media specialist, and designs an evaluation system consistent with the objectives of the unit.

Three-Week Outline of Unit

I. Introductory

Day 1: Springboard: Unveiling the China Chest

Day 2: Oral presentation of homework assignment
Classification of a society's basic institutions
Research groups chosen; chair selected
Strategies of unit explained to students

Day 3: Audio/visual presentation: Overview of China
Discussion
Generalizations made

Day 4-5: Geography Lesson
Group Work

II. Developmental

Day 6-10: Guided Research

III. Culminating

Day 11: Individual groups discuss findings

Day 12: Oral presentation of research findings to class by group chair

Day 13: Oral presentation of research findings to class by group chair

Day 14: Sharing a Chinese Meal

Day 15: Reassembly of China Chest
Guest speaker on China with audio/visual presentation

Unit Outline

Day 1

Springboard:
What's in this box? Who wants to find out? The big secret is discovered. The China Chest is unveiled by students. (Chest should be in center of room with students standing around it, and all having a clear view of China Chest.)

As teacher lifts out individual realia, he/she brainstorms with students, "What does this item represent? From which culture? Why do you think so?" "Who would like to investigate the secret of this realia?" (If more than one hand goes up, teacher must use a specific device to assure that the allocation of requested item is done fairly and consistently.) Some students may end up with 2 or more items, depending on class size. Teacher or designated student records each student's realia on board.

Homework:
Write one paragraph: Why would you like to investigate the realia you have chosen? Student is reminded as to responsibility to article(s).

Day 2

Showing to class the individual item(s) chosen, each student orally presents his/her homework assignment to class. Teacher: Does anyone feel uncomfortable with the selected item(s)? This is your last time to exchange items or present your own idea about what you would like to investigate about China.

Teacher describes how China is going to be studied. (Students will classify investigation into categories, conduct research and present findings to class. Groups of four are formed to work as a team with a chosen chair.

Activity:
Teacher asks students to place their realia into categories: What items have you chosen, David? (Write on board) What item did you select, Susi? (Write on board), etc.

How can we form categories on the basis that societies must survive and, therefore, must conduct their daily life accordingly? (Basic institutions)

Teacher draws from children the answers by proper questioning. (i.e., clothing: What artifacts would

we use (and add to) to find out how the Chinese dress to stay warm during the winter and cool in the summer? What about the new influences from the West?)

Teacher, with students' assistance, develops classification chart of: housing / shelter, food growing/distribution, education, government, law/safety, religion/philosophy, the arts, recreation, sports.

Teacher writes categories on board. He/she records student names in each group, assigns names to each group (shelter group), and each group is asked to select chair. Teacher chooses most advanced group to compile a vocabulary list of new terms encountered during process of research. (Teacher asks each group to place new vocabulary words encountered on a designated space on board.* Advanced group has the responsibility to compile all words into alphabetical order, write a definition and xerox a copy for each classmate at end of designated time by teacher. At the end of unit there should be made one total list with definitions as requested from advanced group.)

Teacher explains research requirements, times in library, written assignment, due date, and times for oral presentations.

Day 3

Film - An Overview of China:
Discussion. (See addendum for suggestions)

Teacher has students make generalizations of what they have observed today that can be compared with previous culture studied. Teacher stresses that after completion of research students must make added generalizations about China and previous culture studied. Students are further reminded to give examples change, communication, conflict and interdependence as they occur in their research study.

Day 4

Geography Lesson:
Teacher distributes blank world map and blank map of China. Using large wall map, globes, and atlases, teacher gives the following assignments: (can be increased or reduced in complexity according to ability levels, grade levels, etc.)

Group Work:

1. Locate China on the World Map. Color in.

2. How many countries/oceans border China? Color them on map, number all countries and write their names next to number on bottom of map.

3. In which hemispheres, continent, longitudes and latitudes is China located?

*or newsprint

4. Identify and locate each country's capital and write the name next to the country on bottom of map.

5. Identify, locate and color in Taiwan and Hong Kong. (Teacher explains their relationship to mainland China.)

6. Chair of each group demonstrates class findings, assigned by teacher on wall map before class.

7. Using the China map, students will
   a. identify and draw in 3 major rivers of mainland China,

   b. locate and color in 2 major deserts and 2 major mountain ranges

   c. identify and color in China's five autonomous regions,

   d. research and color in areas where wheat, cotton and rice are grown

8. Identify and place a dot where China's 6 largest cities are located.

9. Which is the capital?

10. a. How large is China's population?

    b. Where does the majority of Chinese live?

    c. What conclusions can you make whether mainland China is a rural or urban society?

    d. What are the two major languages spoken?

    e. Are dialects spoken? How many? By whom?

11. Identify and place a dot where the capital of each autonomous region is located.

12. Chair of each group demonstrates findings as assigned by teacher on wall map before class.

Teacher:
List the three most important things you have learned about China today.

Days 5 - 9

Equipped with selected realia, students visit library to research their assignment. Emphasis is placed on the concepts of change, communication, conflict and interdependence as students research content. Students are reminded that they should use one or more of the four concepts to investigate their topic in presenting a realistic view of China Today. Media specialist has been previously requested to have materials (print, non-print, pictures) placed on designated tables according to categories. Teacher acts as facilitator and encourager to student groups. (In order to save time research materials can be placed in classroom as previously arranged by teacher and media specialist.)

Homework:

After each library visit, individual student writes summary of daily research.

Day 10 - 11

Individual groups meet to discuss each group member's reports. Each student is responsible for specific portion of total report of four pages. Chair oversees and assists. Requests teacher assistance.

Homework:
Each group member rewrites and has ready for next day polished portion of his/her report.

Day 12

Members of individual groups sit in front of class. Remainder of class forms large circle or sits in theater style closely to presenting group. Chair presents findings of group work or individual student presents his/her findings in 3-5 minutes. Showing of pictures and other acquired items relating to presentation are encouraged by teacher.

Day 13

Continuation of oral presentations. Vocabulary list compiled by designated group is distributed.

Day 14

Class visits Chinese Restaurant or requests parents to bring in fried rice and egg rolls. Students should eat with chopsticks. Hot tea should be poured. Teacher should be hostess rather than center of class. Chinese music background and some decorations could emphasize importance of conclusion of unit.

Day 15 — Students assist teacher in checking off realia against checklist and place items securely into China Chest. Students could write an anonymous paragraph about how much they enjoyed or what they did not enjoy in studying the unit. (Useful for teacher reference and advise to next teacher who uses China Chest) Students discuss vocabulary list.

Day 16 — Test on unit, including vocabulary. Test items can also be combined with another unit test.

Additional Activities:

1. Teaching calligraphy
2. Teaching the abacus or suanpan
3. Teaching embroidery
4. Constructing stick puppets, marrionettes, or hand puppets
5. Constructing and learning how to use tangrams (puzzles)
6. Writing and performing a skit on a specific topic
7. Watching the news for any recent information on China and report to class
8. An evaluation form to assess each group presentation (a brighter group of students could do this assignment for extra credit with teacher assistance.)

Materials Needed:

1. China Chest
2. China Guidebook
3. China Wall Map
4. Student World Map
5. Student China Map
6. World Wall Map

Films Available in Dade County Public Schools Media Library Catalogue:
(Compiled by Susan Almirall, Silver Bluff Elementary School)

1. China: The Awakening Giant
   #13129 - 17 minutes - all levels

2. China: The Old and the New
   #13103 - 16 minutes - all levels

3. China: The Social Revolution
   #13047 - 17 minutes - all levels

4. China: The Two-Headed Dragon
   #14262 - 18 minutes - all levels

5. Mao Tse Tung: Life and Legacy
   #14893 - 15 minutes - all levels

6. Shao Ping: The Acrobat
   #32532 - 25 minutes - all levels

7. The Villages in China Today
   #12983 - 17 minutes - all levels

8. Thunder Out of Asia: The Dragon and His Dream
   #12722 - 16 minutes - all levels

9. Turmoil in Communist China
   #12734 - 16 minutes - all levels

10. Yang-Xun: The Peasant Painter (on geography)
    #32481 - 25 minutes - all levels

Comments

Comments by Teachers as to Improvement or Modification of Unit are welcome here. Can be anonymous if you wish.

Date	Comments

CHINA (PEOPLES REPUBLIC OF)

PEOPLE'S REPUBLIC OF CHINA

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DISCOVERING CHINA TODAY:
A THREE-WEEK TEACHING-LEARNING UNIT FOR UPPER ELEMENTARY GRADES

Curriculum Materials:

1. Discovering China: A Three-Week Teaching-Learning Unit for Upper Elementary Grades, Toni Fuss Kirkwood, Global Awareness Program, College of Education, Florida International University, March 1986.

2. China Chest, collected in the mid 1980's by Toni Fuss Kirkwood.

Supplementary Curriculum Materials:

1. China: A Teaching Unit for Primary Grades, Price Laboratory School, University of Northern Iowa, Cedar Falls, Iowa 50613, Unit III Products 1985.

2. "Come With Us To China." A New China Studies Unit for Elementary Schools. Instructor, February 1985.

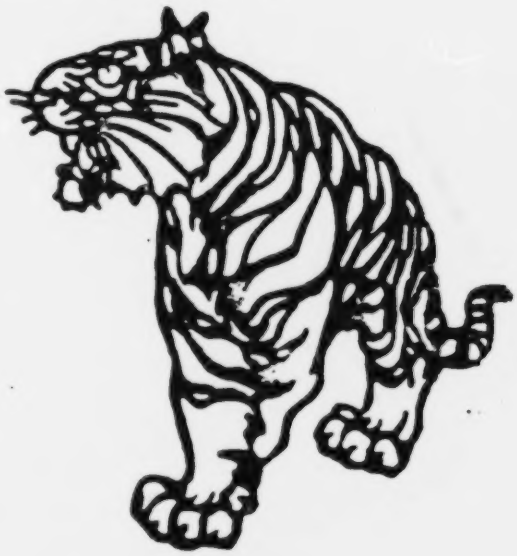
3. China Guidebook, Inter Pacific Tours International, Eurasia Press, New York, 1984 Edition.

Realia:

1. Abacus (suanpan)
2. Art Books 1 and 2
3. Big Puzzle Map
4. Book Marks
5. Calendar - Hong Kong
6. Calendar - 1986 (2)
7. Calendar - 1986 (Desk)
8. Calligraphy
9. Children's Literature
10. Children's Photograph
11. China Map
12. Chinese Wall Map
13. Chopsticks
14. Cloth Purse
15. Clothes Hanger
16. Corn
17. Doll
18. Double Happiness Necklace
19. Fan
20. Flag
21. Globe
22. Ink Engraving
23. Lanterns (3)
24. Mao Zedung Hat
25. Music - Contemporary
26. Music - Traditional
27. Opera Figures
28. Painted Egg in Display Case
29. Panda
30. Papercuts
31. Pencils (3)
32. Picture Hanger
33. Pictures (9)
34. Pins
35. Plate
36. Postcards
37. Poster
38. Rice
39. Silk Box
40. Silk Cloth
41. Silk Handkerchief
42. Silk Threads
43. Small Puzzle Map
44. Snake
45. Stamps
46. Tourist Literature
47. Vase
48. Wrapping Paper
49. Yuan
50. Young Pioneer Scarf
51. Zodiac

THE 人 WHO COULDN'T READ 字

In ancient 中国 on a 山 there lived a fierce 老虎 which hurt 人 and animals. 一天 some 人 who were hunters decided to catch this 老虎. They made a 老虎阱 in the ground. On the 牆 near the 老虎阱 the 人 who were hunters wrote in 大字:



"ALL 人 WHO 走 HERE,
PLEASE BE 小心...
THERE IS A 老虎阱 UNDER THIS 大 SIGN!"

While the 人 who were hunters were waiting for the 老虎, a village 人 who couldn't read 字 came 走 by 唱 a song. Suddenly, he fell into the 中 of the 老虎阱. He called in a 大 voice for 人

to help him. Another 人 heard and pulled him 上 from the 老虎阱. Then, the 人 explained the meaning of the 字 which the 人 who were hunters had written on the 牆.

The village 人 who couldn't read 字 sighed and said, "If I could read 字, then I wouldn't have fallen 下 into the 中 of the 老虎阱!"

Adapted from a story prepared by Caryn White for the University of Arizona East Asia Study Center. Used by permission.

GLOSSARY

THE 人 WHO COULDN'T READ 字

person, people, man, men 人

word, words (Chinese characters) 字

middle 中

country, kingdom 国

China (Middle Kingdom) 中国

mountain 山

tiger 老虎

day 天

trap 阱

wall 墙

big 大

walk, walked, walking 走

small 小

heart 心

be careful 小心

sing, sang, singing 唱

down 下

up 上